LEARNING / I4

Chapter 2 of Frannie
Learns a Lesson: My teacher is a sea monster!

BUSINESS / B2-1

Offshore investments
getting hotter for young Filipinos



SPORTS / A30

La Salle-Ateneo
dream showdown for UAAP crown

ACROSS / A18

Negros Oriental
launches own health insurance program

DFA hisses with talk of slithering resident



By Tarra Quismundo

EITHER AN URBAN LEGend has been born or some slithery character at the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) has acquired diplomatic immunity.

DFA HISSES A23

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Monday, September 15, 2008 • 13 sections / Vol. 23 / No. 283 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

Lozada wasn't abducted, says Court of Appeals

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE COURT OF APPEALS has dismissed Rodolfo "Jun" Lozada's petition for protection, saying the whistle-blower on the scuttled $329-million National Broadband Network

LOZADA A4



LOZADA: Court ruling expected

High inflation risking revolt, says gov't exec

THE COUNTRY FACES A SOCIAL upheaval as the soaring inflation is making life more difficult for many Filipinos, according to a former trade secretary.

"If inflation is too high, no growth or salary hike will ever match the increase. You will be risking a revolution," warned Cesar Bautista, head of a joint government-private sector council on national competitiveness.

Earlier this month, the government said inflation had surged to a 17-year high of 12.5 percent in August. Just weeks earlier, it announced that the gross domestic product (GDP) growth in the first half of the year stood at 4.6 percent.

The Philippines entered 2008 with optimism after posting its best growth since 1976 at 7.3 percent, while inflation had slowed to a 20-year low of 2.8 percent.

But the recent sharp rise in food and fuel prices has had a crippling effect on the country—one of the world's largest importers of rice and a consumer of imported oil for virtually all of its fuel needs.

Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Ralph Recto foresees GDP growth this year at 5.0 to 5.5 percent, while the Congressional Planning and Budget Office has brought its target down to 4.6 to 5.1 percent.

The figures, while respectable, are sharply down from the government's original target of 6.3 to 7.0 percent.

Interest rates may have to rise to control surging inflation.

Economists and businessmen

HIGH A11



COPING Used-clothing stores like this one are booming amid surging inflation, interest rates and prices of goods.

Gov't rice scam bared



PARTY DEFENSE Nacionalista Party spokesperson Gilbert Remulla (left) and Iloilo Vice Gov. Rolex Suplico show the C-5 road map indicating an allegedly double-funded project linking Senate President and NP presidential standard-bearer Manuel Villar.

Auditors uncover fake signatures of farmers

By Jocelyn R. Uy

FAKE SIGNATURES ON THE LIST OF BENEFICIAries were among the irregularities in last year's P218.7-million expenditure of the Department of Agriculture on hybrid rice, certified seeds, farm inputs and fertilizers for farmers in four regions, according to the Commission on Audit.

The purchases were part of the GMA (Ginintuang Masaganang Ani) program intended for the "poorest, often neglected" sectors of the population—the farmers and fisherfolk—to increase their harvest and boost competition in the global market.

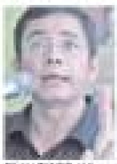
"[T]he good intention of the GMA rice program to reduce poverty incidence and attain national food security is tainted with weaknesses and irregularities in its implementation, reducing the effectiveness of the program," said a report released recently by the COA.

The GMA program also figured in another scam in which former Agriculture Undersecretary Jocelyn Bolante allegedly diverted P728 million in fertilizer funds to finance President Macapagal-Arroyo's campaign in the 2004 presidential election.

At least 52 signatures of farmers on the list of recipients of rice seed and fertilizer were faked, while 139 of 393 recipients interviewed from Central Luzon, Southern Tagalog, Central Visayas and Eastern Visayas received little or

GOV'T RICE A6

Sue Villar on C-5 'anomaly,' NP tells critics



FRANCISCO: Who gained from project?

By Allison W. Lopez and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

INSTEAD OF USING THE SENATE for "malicious imputations" on Senate President Manuel Villar, his detractors should just bring the issue to court, Nacionalista Party (NP) spokesperson Gilbert Remulla said yesterday.

Remulla made the statement a day before Sen. Panfilo Lacson is scheduled to deliver a privilege speech on the supposed double funding of the C-5 extension project.

It was Lacson who reportedly "spotted" the double entry in the national budget.

"We challenge them to file the right cases in court and not to let this be dragged on in an, for lack of a better word, sensational arena such as the Senate. The court is the proper venue," Remulla said at a forum in Sampaloc, Manila.

Remulla said Villar, the NP head who has declared his intention to run in the 2010 presidential election, had nothing to do with the alleged "insertion" in the General Appropriations Act of 2008.

Some senators led by Lacson are calling for an investigation of the "double" allocation in the 2008 budget for the C-5 extension project that is being linked to Villar.

The total funding of P400 million

SUE VILLAR A4

Air strikes only if necessary, Yano assures peace groups

By Julie S. Alipala and Aquiles Z. Zonio
Inquirer Mindanao

ZAMBOANGA CITY—THE MILitary yesterday gave assurances that it would use air strikes against Moro rebels only when necessary, at least during the current Muslim fasting month of Ramadan.

Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Alexander Yano spelled out the military policy on air bombardments after peace advocates in Mindanao said they were present at a meeting in Malacañang where President Macapagal-Arroyo ordered the military to stop the aerial bombings altogether.

AIR STRIKES A4

GMA war policy won't lift her ratings

By Amando Doronila

ANALYSIS

ON AUG. 18, PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo plunged her administration into an all-out-war mode against the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF)—eight years after then President Joseph Estrada himself launched a total war against the separatist group.

Estrada's decision came after the MILF rejected a government ultimatum to sign a peace agreement. By late July that year, the military had taken over 48 rebel camps in Central Mindanao, including the MILF's main base, Camp Abubakar.

The macho leader was determined to have a military solution that would allow the government to negotiate from a "position of strength" and dictate the terms of the peace agreement. He claimed the military sweep had reestablished Philippine sovereignty over the camps.

National sovereignty was an underlying issue of Estrada's war policy. It is now the central issue in the Arroyo war policy.

Speaking after the Aug. 18 emergency meeting of the National Security Council, Ms Ar-

GMA WAR POLICY A8



LINE OF FIRE An Army soldier aims his machine gun at Moro rebel positions in Datu Saudi Ampatuan in Maguindanao.

9 rebels killed in sporadic clashes in Maguindanao

SPORADIC CLASHES IN CENtral Mindanao over the weekend left at least nine Moro rebels, including an officer nicknamed Commander Marlboro, and a soldier dead, the military said yesterday.

Maj. Peter Edwin Navarro, spokesperson of 601st Brigade, told the Inquirer by phone the hostilities that started Saturday noon in the marshy areas of Datu Piang town in Maguindanao also wounded two soldiers.

Navarro said troops engaged an undetermined number of Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) fighters under Ameril Umbra Kato in the villages of Tampao, Bialong and Pusao. Kato pillaged several towns in North Cotabato last month, enraged by the aborted signing of a deal on an expanded Bangsamoro homeland.

"There was a running gun battle. Residents in those areas are reporting Kato's group but they keep on returning there from time to time to get food supplies," Navarro said.

Among those seven guerrillas killed was Commander Marlboro, according to Navarro.

"Up to now, the fighting is ongoing and the bodies of killed rebels were still in the site," he said.

"There was no rebel camp captured as reported by other media organizations," he added.

Navarro said troops fired

9 REBELS A4

Second FRONT PAGE

SUPERLOTTO 6/49
2 5 28 30 34 37
P49,816,360.80

GMA takes economic show on road

Reforms, strong fundamentals to be highlighted, also warning to be prepared

By Christine O. Avendaño

MALACAÑANG WILL EMBARK THIS WEEK ON what it calls an "economic roadshow" to convince investors and the public that reforms are in place and the fundamentals are strong, even as it prepares for the worst.

Nograles tries new tack for Cha-cha

By Christian V. Esguerra

SPEAKER PROSPERO NOGRALES just won't let it go—Charter change (Cha-cha), that is.



TEACHERS AGAINST GARCIA

Public school teachers staged a protest-run on Roxas Boulevard Sunday to call for the resignation of Government Service and Insurance System president and general manager Winston Garcia.



From Mongolia, JDV calls for peace in RP, Georgia

FORMER SPEAKER JOSE DE VENECIA JR. HAS added his voice to the calls to stop the fighting in Mindanao and urged the revival of the peace talks with the Moro secessionist rebels.

Comelec aim: Very credible polls

ANGELES CITY—COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS Chair Jose Melo said yesterday the agency was focusing its efforts on computerizing the 2010 polls so the results would be "beyond reproach."

BI's last resort: Warn would-be illegal OFWs

Lacson to reveal more 'spurious' budget insertions

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

Sue Villar on C-5

3 approval stages

Brittaney Corp.

Stupidity

Straying far from slogan

Chiz has advice for NFA

URDANETA CITY—Sen. Francis "Chiz" Escudero has urged the National Food Authority to buy more palay from local farmers in order to stabilize the palay buying price.

Escudero raised the proposal to help local farmers who, he said, were having a hard time selling their produce at higher prices.

The NFA's market share, or the volume it buys from farmers, is only 3 percent of the country's total production. According to Escudero, the agency buys palay at P17 per kilogram, but since it buys only a small percentage of production, the NFA cannot influence the buying prices set by traders, which are lower than the government's buying rate.

Escudero, in a press conference here Friday, said the NFA, from the 1970s through early '90s, used to buy up to 40 percent of local farmers' harvest.

Some farmers complained that traders bought their palay at P13 to P14 a kg—which was hardly enough to recover their production expenses.

If the NFA would buy more palay, the traders would also increase their buying prices, Escudero said. *Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

Lozada wasn't abducted, says Court of Appeals

Whistle-blower 'disappointed'

Lozada's been on tour

No resistance offered

Too much to accept

No armed tail

Court bias rejected



MUCH APPRECIATED
Marikina City showed its appreciation for its cops with the celebration of Police Memorial Day yesterday. The annual feast recognizes the courage and dedication of its policemen who died in the line of duty. NCRPO Director Geary Barias, Marikina Mayor Marides Fernando and Marikina police chief Supt. Roberto Ramos, among others, salute the flag during the parade.

Razon bats for 3-yr term for PNP chief

The Daily Gospel

9 Moro rebels killed in sporadic clashes



Stalled peace talks upset Malaysian PM



GMA policy won't lift ratings

Gamble paid off

Popularity ploy

Wavering policies

Thatcher example

No rebound in sight

CHR seeks probe of child warriors

Jocelyn R. Uy

Air strikes only if necessary

Ms Arroyo's order

Revised guidelines

Use of human shields

No looting

US troops

Gov't rice scam bared

the farm subsidies or none at all, according to the COA 2007 report on the Department of Agriculture.

In Central Luzon (Region 3) alone, the list of 668 farmers who were supposed to receive hybrid rice and certified seeds included 84 people who were not identified as beneficiaries.

Of the 249 farmer-beneficiaries interviewed by the COA, 8 percent disclosed that they did not receive the seeds and that their signatures on the list were not theirs.

Political intervention

Eighty-six of the farmer-beneficiaries informed the COA that they did not receive the fertilizers distributed by municipal agricultural officers.

Municipal agricultural officers attributed the discrepancy in the listing to "political intervention."

In the report, the COA said the DA Regional Field Unit in Central Luzon purchased a total of 225,798.63 bags of hybrid rice and certified seeds worth P71.28 million to be distributed to various provinces in the region.

It also spent P183.73 million on farm inputs and fertilizers as government subsidy for the farmer beneficiaries.

The COA also found that part of the fertilizer was wasted due to its late distribution to farmers. In Barangay Lanang in Tarlac City, an audit team found 37 packs of Plant-N fertilizer worth P2,220 lying around in a [illegible] shed.

Farmer-beneficiaries in Southern Tagalog (Region 4) encountered the same anomalies. Some of them denied the signatures on the list and others claimed that the farm subsidies distributed to them were lacking.

The region spent P38.73 million for the GMA Rice Program for the wet season last year, according to the report.

Sampling

Interviews of beneficiaries were conducted on a sampling basis and were performed in Laguna, Occidental Mindoro, Oriental Mindoro and Busuanga Island in Palawan, according to the COA.

Of the 94 recipients in Occidental Mindoro and Laguna, eight said they did not receive the correct quantity of seeds while 12 got more as required.

Thirty-one of the farmers claimed that the signatures on the master list were not theirs, while 28 revealed the discrepancy of the actual size of the farms with the agricultural technicians' records.

"Audit likewise disclosed that technicians do not always follow the one-bag-one-farmer scheme in distributing seeds," the report said.

Favored farmers get more

"Interviews also revealed that technicians [illegible] the seeds they gave to farmers they favor and compensate the difference by lessening the seeds of other beneficiaries," the report said.

The validation conducted in the DA Regional Field Unit in Central Visayas "could not be completely relied upon" since the signatures of at least three farmers differed from what appeared on the list and two did not receive the subsidized seeds, the COA said.

The agency uncovered other irregularities: 14 out of 66 recipients did not receive the right amount of seeds and other farm inputs while a total of nine whose names did not appear in the list acknowledged the receipt of the subsidized seeds.

While the audit team found no discrepancy between the amount of hybrid and certified rice seeds distributed and the quantity received by farmers in Eastern Visayas, the COA noted that not all rice seeds received per master list reached the intended beneficiaries.

Unaccounted for

The DA Regional Field Unit in Eastern Visayas purchased 39,701 bags of hybrid and certified rice seeds worth P22.98 million intended for 20,201 farmer-beneficiaries.

But of the 1,345 kilos of rice seeds allotted to 11 beneficiaries per list, only 721 kilos or 54 percent actually reached the concerned farmers. There were 624 kilos or 46 percent of the rice seeds unaccounted for, it added.

"We recommend and management agreed to design a systematic procedure to improve the manner of distribution of farm inputs and implements to the intended farmers and monitor the distribution to maximize use of government resources and increase performance level," the COA said.

RP lures Japanese couples looking for wedding venue

GET READY FOR ANOTHER JAPANESE INvasion. This time, Japanese couples are headed to the Philippines to tie the knot.

The Department of Tourism is positioning the Philippines as the newest destination for Japanese couples to get married.

Yearly, over 450,000 couples choose to hold their wedding ceremonies outside Japan, according to Tourism Secretary Ace Durano.

He said Japanese couples usually go to Hawaii and Guam during the spring (April to May) and fall (September to October) to wed.

"Young, independent Japanese women have always been in the radar of our promotional activities, where we highlight the country's attractions, beach and fashion shopping attractions. As they move on to another stage in their lives, we want to show them ... [that] leisure trips are also perfect settings for weddings and honeymoons," Durano said in a statement.



DURANO

He also said that the market represented a huge opportunity for the Philippine wedding, food and travel industries.

Durano urged Filipino travel wholesalers, tourist establishments, wedding and event planners and other industry players to integrate their services and develop specialized programs. "Weddings are a major part of the Filipino culture and we have the capability to provide the best celebrations set in the most romantic locations with a variety of preferences," he said.

Durano and other tourism officials also met with officers of Japanese media group Recruit Co. Ltd., which publishes Zexy Magazine, Japan's leading bridal glossy magazine which is the top source of couples who opt for out-of-town and overseas weddings.

The tourism chief also revealed that talks have begun to promote the Philippines as a destination for healthy food.

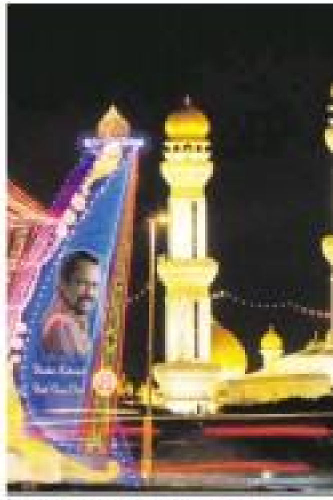
The DOT has partnered with the Japan Vegetable and Fruit Meister Association, a specialty food club that highlights good eating habits through educational programs, culinary schools, fresh produce retail stores and cafés.

There are currently close to 20,000 members or "meisters" across Japan, Durano said.

"We will also highlight the country's tropical fruits such as mangoes and other organic products," said Tourism Undersecretary for Planning and Promotions Eduardo Jarque Jr.

Japan is currently the third leading source of travelers to the Philippines. Arrivals from this country reached 245,431 between January and June, representing 13.3 percent of overall tourist traffic in the country.

Margaux C. Ortiz

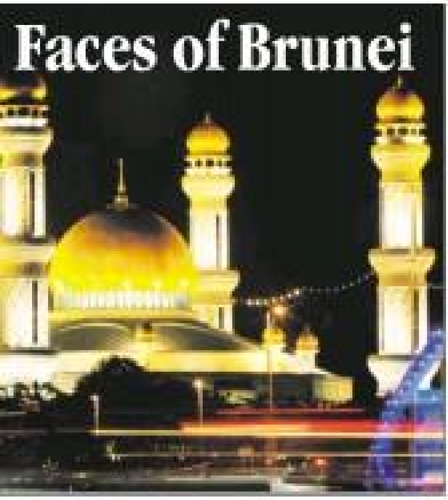


SPLENDOR IN THE DARK



ARCH PLAYMATES

Faces of Brunei



...pe at night.

INQUIRER photojournalist Edwin Bacasmas captures the faces of Bruneian people, their cultural heritage and environmental efforts during a recent visit to the sultanate.



THE DAY'S LAST HAUL. Fishermen gather their final catch for the day in the coastal area of [illegible].



ROYAL REACHOUT Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah (center) with wishers on his 62nd birthday celebration.



PARTY OPENER Confetti rains on participants during their presentation for the sultan in Kuala Belait.





SOLIDARITY Performers show off their traditional costumes during the Brunei leader's 62nd birthday celebration in Tutong District.

OPINION

In the air

IT IS ONE OF THOSE STORIES THAT GIVE THE reader pause. Leaders of peace advocacy groups in Mindanao have claimed that they heard President Macapagal-Arroyo order Armed Forces chief of staff Gen. Alexander Yano last Thursday to stop "bombings and air strikes" in Mindanao. Such an order, we believe, is welcome, but did the President in fact issue it?

EDITORIAL

Yano himself said no. "There is no such instruction," he told reporters yesterday. The commanding general of the Philippine Air Force, Lt. Gen. Pedrito Cadungog, said no, reporting that he had not received any order to stand down. Air strikes will continue on a "limited basis," he said, in the continuing pursuit of rogue Moro Islamic Liberation Front rebels. And AFP spokesman Lt. Col. Ernesto Torres Jr. said no. "No such instructions from HEPGMA," his text message read. (Incidentally, the acronym he used, which stands for "Her Excellency President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo," is a totally unnecessary and especially unfortunate one. It makes her sound like a liver disease.)

But the peace advocates cannot be accused of making things up. Their recollections of the circumstances, which took place during a meeting between the President and a group of 17 evacuees from Lanao del Norte, North Cotabato and Maguindanao, are all of a piece. "Before the meeting started, she called for General Yano and told him there should be no bombing and air strikes," said Mary Ann Arnado of the Mindanao Peoples Caucus. Fr. Eduardo Vasquez said: "When we raised the issue of aerial bombings, she was very emphatic. There should be no bombing, no air strike. When Yano came in, she reminded him about it." And academic Octavio Dinampo, last in the headlines as TV reporter Ces Drilon's escort during her ill-fated attempt to interview the Abu Sayyaf, remembered the President's order and its immediate context. "No more aerial and artillery bombings after the death of [the] Mandi family—five children and their pregnant mother," Dinampo said.

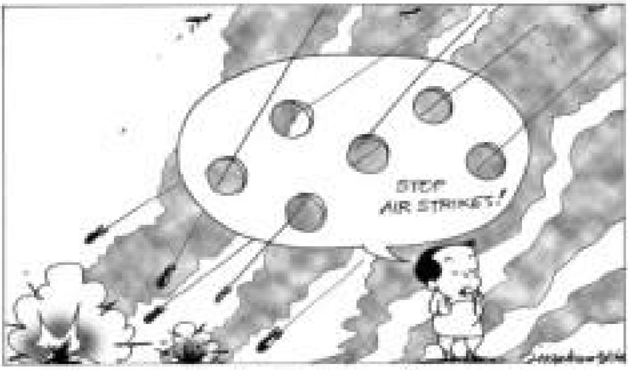
Could all these responsible persons be telling the truth?

It does not make tactical sense to ease up on the military's pursuit of what it calls LMG, "the lawless MILF group," during the holy Islamic season of Ramadan—especially when the rogue rebels are on the run and when the momentum is on the side of the military. But pursuit operations against Ameril Umbra Kato, Commander Bravo and [illegible] do not have to take the form of air strikes. Of all the options available to the AFP, the air strike carries the most risk of causing collateral damage. An aerial attack on several boats a week ago led to the deaths of the Mandi family, six evacuees among many.

At the same time, it does not make strategic sense for the AFP to broadcast a new no-air-strike policy, especially when we consider the circumstances that led to the resumption of full-scale armed offensives in the first place. The rushed attempt to sign a memorandum on ancestral domain that laid the basis for recognition of a state within a state and then, after public revulsion over both the attempt and the stealth approach government peace negotiators took, the retaliatory attacks launched by rogue MILF commanders and the consequent accusations by local leaders that the military was less than committed to the security of civilians in Mindanao—all these have all but made it impossible for the military to be perceived as going soft, yet again, on the MILF.

In other words, military top brass may couch their statements in calibrated phrases—Cadungog, for example, said "limited" air operations will continue against the LMG—but military operations may become deliberately more targeted. Thus, fewer air strikes, more artillery barrages.

There is also the Arroyo factor. Either she was lying, playing to the gallery, during her meeting with the evacuees. Or she really meant what she said, and Yano et al. understood her, in a way that won't diminish soldiers' morale. An unannounced suspension of air strikes would not hurt the military's chances of capturing the rebel leaders, while showing the military's openness to Muslim sensitivities. The problem is, she may have spoken to Yano in a special language, but her audience of peace advocates and war refugees heard her in plain English.



Happy days in the Malabon of my boyhood

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

(Continued from last Friday)

AS A FAVORITE GAME OF THE BOYS AND girls in our neighborhood, we played bahay-bahayan and picnic. [illegible]

Public office

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

[illegible]

Publisher Isagani Yambot
Editor in Chief Letty Jimenez Magsanoc
[illegible]

OPINION

A guide to examination of conscience



SOUNDING BOARD

Fr. Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.

Executive privilege for Jocjoc Bolante?



REVEILLE

Ramon J. Farolan

Opining Mindanao



KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Antonio J. Montalvan II

The rise of a new leadership



THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

Contributed photos, anyone?

[illegible]

As of September 8: SSS' new ID machine fixed

[illegible]

Letters

Require helmets

[illegible]

No peace sans justice for Muslims

[illegible]

Kudos for 'blind spots' column

[illegible]

Jica clarifies report on status of projects

[illegible]

In defense of Santos and the Sabio brothers

[illegible]



5 persons on sunken boat rescued

[illegible]

13th NREA-HUDCC Confab & Exhibits To Open in Makati City

Para Sa 'Yo ang Bahay Na 'To is Theme; To Highlight Gov't 1-M Homes Target

HOUSING TRADE EXHIBITS, Sept 15-16, 2008
Glorietta Activity Center, Ayala Malls, Makati City
13th NATIONAL CONVENTION, Sept. 24-25, 2008
Ayala Hall, Makati Sports Club, Legaspi St., Makati City

[illegible]

Negros Or. launches own health insurance

By Alex Pal
Inquirer Visayas

DUMAGUETE CITY—NEGROS ORIENTAL HAS launched its own health insurance program that promises to outdo the state-owned PhilHealth in delivering medical services.

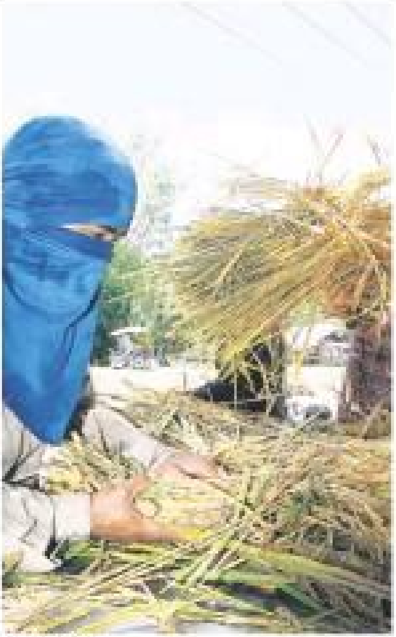
[illegible]

Stumbling block

[illegible]

Allocation

[illegible]



PALAY SPARED Farmers in Datu Piang town in Maguindanao harvest their palay, three days after the military launched an air strike that left six civilians dead.

NEWSBRIEFS

■ COTABATO CITY

Teen hurt in blast

[illegible]

■ JOLO, SULU

3 injured in explosion

[illegible]

■ TAGUM CITY

Fireman dies in accident

[illegible]

■ LEGAZPI CITY

2 quakes rock Albay

[illegible]

■ LUCENA CITY

33 hurt in road mishap

[illegible]

■ MASBATE

Soldier wounded in clash

[illegible]

■ SORSOGON CITY

Landmines recovered

[illegible]

Stomach illnesses up in Pangasinan

LINGAYEN, PANGASINAN—THE NUMBER of cases of acute gastroenteritis in Pangasinan [illegible]

Symptoms

[illegible]

High number

[illegible]

Permanent transfer sought for mining families in Compostela

TAGUM CITY—OFFICIALS IN COMPOSTELA Valley are looking for funds to permanently relocate some 350 families rendered homeless by landslides that hit Barangay Masara in Maco town on Sept. 7 and 8.

Gov. Arturo Uy, Rep. Rommel "Bebong" Amatong of the second district, and Maco Mayor Arthur "Ochoy" Bolante Remendo met with a representative of the National Housing Authority (NHA) here on Saturday and discussed possible programs to help the local governments resettle the families.

Twenty-four people were confirmed dead while two remained missing in the disasters. Masara and neighboring Elizalde villages were emptied of residents following a recommendation from the Mines and Geosciences Bureau that these areas be abandoned because of susceptibility to landslides owing to cracks seen on the sides of its hills.

A 10-meter wide gash has been found near the tight portion of the mountain in Masara that could collapse during a downpour and threaten communities below.

The evacuees are now housed in several classrooms in Barangay Elizalde, also in Maco, some 10 kilometers from the disaster site, but Uy said they cannot stay there forever.

> The MGB has identified 20 other villages throughout Compostela Valley—most of them known mining sites—as "landslide high-risk areas"

Vulnerable

"The area itself is not suitable as relocation site since it is surrounded by hills which are also vulnerable to landslides. I'm worried we're just putting them in more risks if they will stay in Elizalde," he said. The village is even tagged by the MGB as among the areas considered "high-risk" for landslides, he added.

Uy said the evacuees could stay in Elizalde for up to a year while a relocation area was being prepared.

He said the provincial government had started building bunkhouses made of nipa and bamboo for them as temporary homes in an area owned by the Catholic Church in Elizalde.

Mayor Remendo said "almost all" of the residents in the two villages heeded the call to "totally abandon" the areas. He expected more families who would be seeking shelter in the evacuation centers.

Uy said he was considering Barangay Kinuban, also in Maco and next to Elizalde, as the ideal relocation site. The village "has a flat ground, has no hills and near the road," he said.

The governor said he wanted the relocation site to become a "showcase project."

Aside from Masara and Elizalde, the MGB has identified 20 villages throughout Compostela Valley—most of them known mining sites—as "landslide high-risk areas."

Advantage

"The Masara relocation project would help residents in those high-risk areas to realize the need to vacate. If they see the advantages, then it would be easier for us to convince them to relocate to safer grounds," Uy said.

He said he and the two other officials will seek an audience with President Macapagal-Arroyo and ask for assistance while the NHA promised to help look for housing funds.

He also said he would try to tap private organizations, including former US President Jimmy Carter's Habitat for Humanity Foundation, for possible help.

"The ideal site will be a six-hectare area, with the four hectares for the housing complex while the remaining two hectares will be allotted for the road network and other infrastructures," Uy said of the planned relocation site.

Frinston Lim, Inquirer Mindanao

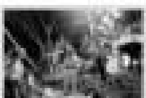


TRACES of previous landslides can be seen in the mountain range of Masara village in Maco town, Compostela Valley province, proof that the area is "high-risk" for village people.

Pushing Tourism Ahead







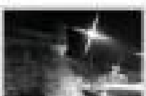






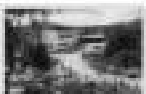






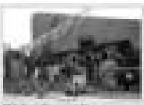












Longest, biggest 'pastillas' in Guinness

Support



THE LONGEST "pastillas"

Laguna pastor freed from jail

Melo: No funds for recall polls



'Ms Gay Peñafrancia' offends Naga prelate

NAGA CITY—RAISING CONCERN OVER creeping commercialism in the Feast of the Nuestra Señora de Peñafrancia, Archbishop Leonardo Z. Legaspi of the Archdiocese of Caceres reminded the Catholic faithful that the essence of the celebration was the renewal of faith and understanding of the devotion to the Ina.

The prelate brushed aside the issue of street parties that the city government has approved as sideshow only to the commercialism that had shadowed the religious celebration in recent years.

These, he said, would tarnish the religiosity of the only regional fiesta in the Philippines.

He said what was important about the celebration was the understanding and acceptance of its religiosity because, he said, it would allow people to examine the activities that were to happen during the weeklong fiesta that started Sept. 12 and would end Sept. 20.



THOUSANDS of devotees attend the Peñafrancia festivities Sept. 13 in Naga City.

Gay pageant

Legaspi cited a gay beauty pageant, in which, he said, he reacted negatively because it used the name "Miss Gay Peñafrancia." This, for him, was not appropriate because it tended to disrespect the devotion to the Nuestra Señora de Peñafrancia.

"I have nothing against them (gays) but it is not proper to use it in that kind of activity. I am happy they dropped the Peñafrancia tag in that pageant," he said.

"My observation is that many of us in Bicol do not understand yet the Feast of Peñafrancia. They only think of celebrating and that's all."

In a letter dated Sept. 9 addressed to Mayor Jesse Robredo, Legaspi said, "As may be observed, many activities slated Sept. 1 and onwards are held under the banner of the Peñafrancia Fiesta. When a calendar of events bears the image of our Ina, these events proclaim her feast; they signal the joy of a people honoring their Mother."

"When an activity—public or private—is held celebrating her feast, it is incumbent upon the organizers to examine whether the activity does indeed bring honor to her, and to honor our Ina is to preserve the welfare and dignity of her children."

The prelate has acknowledged that the city government had resolved to strictly regulate the holding of street parties, in deference to the welfare of the constituents and to the religious nature of the Peñafrancia feast.

He said the street parties and similar activities only pandered to the people's misguided desires rather than empowered them to uphold higher values, most especially, their dignity.

Legaspi noted that the devotion to the Ina transcends the local government and even the Republic of the Philippines, so that, he said, it is the duty of the Church to ensure that the devotion is held sacrosanct in the life of the community.

He further said that the local government must not only respect but must also adhere to the Church's call as she performs this sacred duty.

"The devotion is the thread that binds Bikolano families. It is the same thread that now binds us to families beyond Bikol and the country. As such, this dialogue must open. I began this dialogue as the Spiritual Father of the Archdiocese, and I called upon you as mayor of Naga City."

Robredo declined to comment when the Inquirer phoned him on Thursday. *Juan Escandor Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon*

High inflation risking revolt

From page A1

agree that while such a rate hike could be painful, it may be the best option for the country as it tries to navigate the rough seas of the global economy.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) raised interest rates by 25 basis points late last month, taking the overnight borrowing rate to 6 percent and overnight lending rate to 8 percent to rein in inflation.

Diwa Guinigundo, the BSP deputy governor, said the economy was strong enough to withstand the increase and was confident GDP growth could still hit above 5 percent this year.

Batchin said such rate hikes were a good idea especially as the increases came in small increments.

Increased gov't spending

"They have to ... make sure the rate hikes do not completely stifle growth," Batchin said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has abandoned her plans of a balanced budget in 2009 and 2010, Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya said, with her Cabinet instead announcing increased spending programs on infrastructure and social services.

"Some of the policy measures which the government has announced seem to be going in the right direction," said World Bank country director Bert Hofman.

"Delaying the balanced budget target for a few years seems to be the right move," Hofman said.

Consumers hold back

People have become more cautious with their spending, said Jun Viana, an analyst with AB Capital Securities.



"UKAY-UKAY" or used clothes outlets are thriving amid increasing inflation and interest rates. AFP

"Consumer confidence suffered as people, in expectation of bad times, held back," he said.

"Real investments have also suffered because businesses tend to move ahead of consumer spending," Viana added.

The government and many economists insist the Philippines is merely the victim of external forces.

"Our growth output only mirrors what major economies in the world are experiencing due to high food and oil prices which induced inflation and holds back consumer spending," Press Secretary Jesus Dureza said. "We definitely cannot attribute (the slowdown) to the local economy."

An economist at one of the country's largest banks, who did not want to be named, said: "They can't blame Gloria for this. It is a global and regional event."

Gil Francisco, executive vice president of Banco de Oro, predicted the economic slowdown would be "temporary."

"By the end of the month, we should see signs of a rebound. There is still a lot of liquidity in the system. People have money to spend. When they start spending, it will have a multiplier effect," he said.

The BSP said a survey of business organizations found that the outlook turned bearish for the third quarter due to "the surging prices of fuel and other raw materials, rising domestic prices of food, especially rice."

"Respondents, however, were broadly optimistic that business conditions would improve in the fourth quarter," the central bank said. AFP

DFA hisses with talk of slithering resident

From page A1

For the past few weeks, the DFA head office on Roxas Boulevard in Pasay City has been hissing with talk that a python had taken residence in the 14-story building.

Rumor has it that an employee earlier kept the big snake in a pet cage somewhere in the basement. The python supposedly managed to escape and has since made several unannounced appearances in different parts of the building, at one point triggering a security alert.

"We always talk about it and we even joke that once we catch it, we will have it as pulutan (a dish to go with liquor)," said a security guard, who recalled responding to a "sighting" of the snake last month.

'Big accomplishment'

"We searched the second floor (but) we did not find it. We also received a report that it was seen at the canteen (also on the second floor)," the guard said.

These areas were placed under "surveillance" for a few days, he added.

"It will be a big accomplishment if we catch that snake," said the guard, who agreed to talk to the Inquirer on Friday about the building's scaly stealthy tenant on the condition he would not be named.

But the agency's official denial was straight and far from serpentine. "Those are just rumors. There are no snakes," a ranking DFA media relations officer insisted.

Still, a junior officer recalled hearing "warnings" about the snake during a recent orientation lecture for newly hired DFA personnel.

'Snake with legs'

"It was said as a statement of fact that our building is inhabited by all sorts of creatures," the officer said.

The officer said having a conversation snake on the loose at the aging DFA building may not actually be a bad idea since pythons are known to prey on rats.

And cracking an in-joke, the officer wondered aloud: "If they can't get rid of snakes without legs, how can they get rid of those with legs?"

NEWS

Hong Kong has best judicial system in Asia; RP ranks 6th

Worst judiciary

Close correlation

Contracts, IPR protection

History Week begins at historic shrine

Aplus METRO

DID YOU KNOW



JUNE 1996 RAID ON POPULAR GOURMET SHOP

Trader wins case vs broker

THE COURT OF APPEALS HAS upheld a lower court ruling awarding P400,000 in damages and fees to the owner of a gourmet shop in Forbes Park, Makati City, following a raid in 1996 on the establishment that damaged its reputation and resulted in business losses.

MMDA: No letup in drive against sidewalk vendors



Katipunan trike drivers hoping for a reprieve

METROBRIEFS

P17M for city schools

STUDENTS and the teachers of public schools in Mandaluyong City can soon look forward to having new equipment and more books for their libraries. So far, Mandaluyong Rep. Neptali M. Gonzales allocated P17 million for the purchase of computers, photocopying machines, multimedia projectors and library materials for 20 schools. In a statement, Gonzales said that he has already released P2.4 million to Highway Hills Integrated School for an LCD projector, 20 computers with printers, a sound system, two air-conditioners, a photocopier machine and books. Two other schools, Bonifacio Javier National High School and the Mandaluyong High School, also received P800,000 each for the construction of their own speech laboratories. "Public education does not mean inferior education. In my district, I make sure we have enough classrooms and equipment for the students and teachers," said Gonzales.

Beverly T. Natividad

Man shot dead

THE MANILA police is probing the killing of a homeowners' association president in Sta. Ana, Manila, yesterday. Guillermo Bigornia, who heads the Tejeron Pasig Line Homeowners' Association, was shot once in the head by still unidentified man while tending his sari-sari store on Tejeron Street. He was declared dead on arrival at the Ospital ng Maynila. PO3 Jonathan Ruiz of the Manila Police District homicide division said the killing may be related to the victim's position. No witnesses, however, have come forward, he added.

Allison W. Lopez

By Marlon Ramos

THE LEADER OF A GROUP OF tricycle drivers yesterday asked Quezon City Vice Mayor Herbert Bautista to make good on his promise that he would work for the lifting of a tricycle ban on Katipunan Avenue.

Alex Rosy, president of the Loyola-Renard Tricycle Drivers and Operators Association, told the Inquirer that Bautista earlier assured him and other members of the group that they would be able to ply the route again.

The ban, imposed by the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, has been in effect since Aug. 18. According to the agency, tricycles were to blame for heavy traffic in the area.

Bautista, Rosy said, made the promise during a privilege speech he delivered during a session of the city council on Sept. 1.

But a day after Bautista's speech, MMDA traffic enforcers arrested several tricycle drivers plying the avenue for violating the ban, Rosy said.

"We're still hoping that he will fulfill his promise to us. We need his help in getting a long-term solution to this problem," he added.

According to Rosy, the ban has adversely affected the more than 300 members of his group. Their daily average earnings have gone down by more than 60 percent since Aug. 18, he said.

"We used to bring home at least P400 for our family. After the ban was implemented, we're lucky if we earn P150 a day," he said.

Reached for comment by the Inquirer, Bautista said in a text message that he has yet to see the results of last week's meeting between the MMDA and the city's Traffic Regulatory Unit.

He added that MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando has signified his intention to meet the city council today.

"The process is moving. Give us some time. At least we saw respect the MMDA to compromise in a couple of weeks after the dialogue," Bautista said.

Trader wins . . .

From page A1

[illegible] was ousted that Rayen Corr was the sole distributor of its products in the Philippines. But the appellate court pointed out that the certification was not meant to appoint the firm as the exclusive seller of Trotonia products.

The court also noted that Trotonia of Switzerland issued a certification in June 1996 naming another firm called Windenburg as one of its product distributors.

It added that the Trotonia products being sold in Seech's were covered by documents as having been bought from Windenburg.

"In their haphazard act of pointing their accusatorial fingers on just anyone, the good reputation of appellee and his store was defamed and irrevocably marred," the appellate court said.

The Trotonia products belonging to Rayen Corr were stolen in May 1996 when one of its trucks was allegedly hijacked. Red filed a complaint with the police and said she was sure that the Trotonia products being sold in Seech's were among the stolen products. After a search warrant was obtained, a raid was conducted on the delicatessen shop and Seech's house in Makati.



END NOWHERE IN SIGHT FOR QC BOTTLENECK PROBLEM

Regyn Salgado of Don Antonio Heights, Diliman, Quezon City, writes: "There is an unfinished road project involving concrete barriers at the corner of Commonwealth Avenue and Don Enrique Street near Elliot in Diliman, Quezon City. This junction is the site of traffic jams every day because vehicles converge there since it is a short cut to Fairview. Residents also happen often as vehicles jockey for choice positions. The barriers that eat up a portion of both streets cause a bottleneck during rush hours, and has already been brought to the attention of Public Works Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane, who lives nearby and passes by this junction every day, Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte, Metropolitan Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando and even the Office of the President. Yet no one has acted on this problem that has been causing inconvenience among motorists for two years now. The matter was already reported to your paper before, but it failed to catch the attention of the authorities concerned."

Looking for book donations

[illegible]

BYRON SUMBUNGO, 19, Concepcion, Malabon City

Old buses in mall terminal

[illegible]

JERRY CASTASCO, 51, Malibay, Barangka City

Diggings cause traffic jams

THE DIGGINGS as a result of a water improvement project on Sampaloc Avenue at the corner of [illegible] in front of [illegible] restaurant in Parañaque City has been there more than a year now. It has been the cause of traffic jams, especially during peak hours, as vehicles tend to slow down in that portion of the road. Is anyone going to do anything about it?

JERRY SURACHI, 54, Parañaque City

Muddy mess at QC barangay

CALLING the attention of the Department of Public Highways contractor of the road work on [illegible] Street at Maligaya Subdivision, Barangay Pasong Putik, Quezon City. It has been two months since work on the road improvement project began, but mud and soil remain on the street, turning into a messy situation especially when there is a downpour. This has been the source of complaints from residents on their way to a nearby school and university.

[illegible], Caloocan City

LASTING BUSH LEGACY

US arms sales jump to $32B

WASHINGTON—THE BUSH administration is pushing through a broad array of foreign weapons deals as it seeks to rearm Iraq and Afghanistan, contain North Korea and Iran, and solidify ties with onetime Russian allies.

From tanks, helicopters and fighter jets to missiles, remotely piloted aircraft, and even warships, the Department of Defense has agreed so far this fiscal year to sell or transfer more than $32 billion in weapons and other military equipment to foreign governments, compared with $12 billion in 2005.

The trend, which started in 2006, is most pronounced in the Middle East, but it reaches into northern Africa, Asia, Latin America, Europe and even Canada, through dozens of deals that senior Bush administration officials say they are confident will both tighten military alliances and combat terrorism.

"This is not about being gun runners," said Bruce S. Lemkin, the Air Force deputy undersecretary who is helping to coordinate many of the biggest sales. "This is about building a more secure world."

The surging American arms sales reflect the foreign policy aims, including the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the broader campaign against international terrorism, that have dominated the Bush administration.

Deliveries on orders now being placed will continue for several years, perhaps turning out to be one of President Bush's most lasting legacies.

The United States is far from the only country pushing sophisticated weapons systems. It is facing intense competition from Russia and elsewhere in Europe, including continuing contests for multibillion-dollar deals to sell fighter jets to India and Brazil.

In that booming market, US military contractors are working closely with the Pentagon, which acts as a broker and procures arms for foreign countries through its foreign military sales program.

Less sophisticated weapons, and services to maintain these weapons systems, are often bought directly by foreign governments. That category of direct commercial sales has seen an enormous surge as well, as measured by export licenses issued this fiscal year, totaling an estimated $96 billion, up from $58 billion in 2005, according to the Department of State, which must approve the licenses. *New York Times News Service*

Bomber hits UN convoy in Afghanistan; 3 dead

SPIN BOLDAK, AFGHANISTAN—A suicide bomber in a vehicle attacked a convoy carrying Afghan doctors working for the United Nations in southern Afghanistan on Sunday, killing two doctors and their driver and wounding 13 other people, officials said.

The attack happened in the Spin Boldak district of Kandahar province as the convoy was on its way to vaccinate people against polio, according to police reports.

The two doctors were under contract with the UN World Health Organization in combating polio in Afghanistan. The driver also worked for the UN mission. All three were Afghan nationals.

The blast also wounded 13 other people, including 10 civilians and the Afghan guards protecting the convoy. The bomber also died in the blast.

Police said the doctors were traveling in clearly marked UN vehicles.

The United Nations was trying to "determine if that was an explicit attack on the UN or if we were a target of opportunity," a UN spokesperson said. "This attack was on innocent civilians working only for the people of Afghanistan, and is beyond comprehension." *AP*

WorldBriefs

'Ike' batters Texas

Russian plane crash

Deadly rail disaster

New Democratic tack

Charge against Palin

Partial Russia pullout

Typhoon floods Taiwan

Unrest in Bolivia

The WORLD



[illegible caption]

Chinese docs operated on Kim—Kyodo News

TOKYO—NORTH KOREAN leader Kim Jong-il [illegible] ... according to the report. AP

Acting premier lifts state of emergency in Bangkok

BANGKOK—THAILAND'S ACTING PRIME MINISTER lifted a state of emergency in Bangkok on Sunday, urging all sides in a political crisis to find a peaceful compromise and restore the country's image as "The Land of Smiles."

[illegible] AP

Cops allow Anwar rally amid crackdown

KUALA LUMPUR—MALAYSIAN [illegible] Reuters



THOUSANDS of pilgrims [illegible] Pope Benedict XVI [illegible] at the Lourdes shrine on Sunday. AP

Pope lauds power of love at Lourdes

LOURDES, FRANCE—POPE BENEDICT XVI [illegible]

"The power of love is stronger than the evil which threatens us," Benedict said.

[illegible] AP

5 blasts kill 21 in New Delhi

NEW DELHI—POLICE [illegible] AP

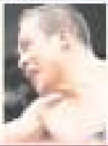


[illegible caption] AP

WHAT'S INSIDE

■ **Marquez** stops foe, eyes rematch vs Pacquiao

/A32



SPORTS

DREAM SHOWDOWN

Archers, Eagles seal title clash

Hazy NCAA Final 4 picture clears up today



Hazy NCAA Final Four picture clears up today

Archers, Eagles seal dream clash

THE DREAM SHOWDOWN JUST GOT SEALED.



So leads charge of Pinoy GMs

SPORTSWATCH

Cebu, Taguig start Liga finals

Billiards at PSA Forum

GCAP derby today

Saldaña widow donates '54 bronze, ball to PSC

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo



Bumgarner makes karting history



Jarula rules Samsung Am

Sermona, Sealza win Milo La Union leg



SPORTS

Marquez stops foe, charts course towards Pacquiao



Pacman laughs off Oscar's fight plan

Guzman backs out of bout



BUSINESS



Congress warned on new free port bills

Tax perks to erode gov't fiscal position

By Michelle V. Remo

FINANCE SECRETARY MARGARITO Teves has appealed to the Senate to exercise caution in creating laws that will negatively impact on tax collection, expressing concern over the numerous bills seeking to establish more free ports and economic zones in the country.

Given the economy's need for higher public spending to cushion the ill effects of a global slowdown and high inflation, Teves said the government needed to maintain its revenue sources.

He warned that putting up more free ports and economic zones would make it difficult for the government to pump-prime the economy without creating a fiscal meltdown.

"[The Department of Finance] is alarmed by the more than 20 bills creating economic zones and free ports all over the country, each of which proposes generous grants of tax and duty exemptions to investors," Teves said in a letter sent last week to Senate President Manuel Villar.

Teves said existing free ports were more than enough and adding more would lead to substantial loss of vital state revenues, he said.

There are free ports in Clark, Subic, Cagayan, Zamboanga and Poro Point and over a hundred economic zones throughout the country.

Pending bills in Congress seeking to cre-

CONTINUED ON B2

Currencies



Stock Market



Sluggish trading seen

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

TRADING IS SEEN TO REMAIN LACKLUSTER this week as investors continue to grapple with a dearth of market-moving news.

"We still seeing consolidation in the stock market. We're not expecting major economic data to come from the US which serves as a guide for global factors," said Eric Claudio, stock market strategist for Penta Capital Investment and Intra-Invest Securities.

AB Capital Securities also said that investors were on the lookout for news indicating that it was time to get back into the market.

"However, that won't be happening (this) week. The current resistance of 2,750 is not likely to be tested (this) week. The current support of 2,600 will surely be tested and technical indicators point to the support not holding," AB Capital securities analyst Prince Yeung said in a market report.

CONTINUED ON B2



Housing, car loans growing

By Doris C. Dumlao

METROPOLITAN BANK AND TRUST CO., the country's largest bank, has reported a faster-than-expected growth in housing and car loans in the first eight months, suggesting a robust contribution from consumer lending for the rest of the year.

Metrobank's car and home loan availments in the first eight months expanded by 30.03 percent and 27.83 percent, respectively, over the volume generated in the same period last year, the bank said in a statement.

Metrobank senior vice president and head of consumer lending Vanessa Oliveros noted that the consumer loan production has shown consistent growth with June and July 2008 registering

HOUSING B4

Sluggish . . .

From page B1

AB Capital said the market's sluggishness stemmed from jitters over the health of the world economy.

"These concerns are not unfounded as the economy is headed toward a growth of less than 5 percent. Inflation, which was thought to have peaked last August, may still have room to move slightly upward," Wong said.

He added that the central bank recently said that the recent typhoons might cause a slight uptick in inflation this month. He advised investors to stay on the sidelines.

"Investors are quick to take advantage of selling opportunities and rotations to be risk averse," he said.

Fund managers cut investments in Asian stocks, retreat to bonds

Risk aversion due to slowing economies, rising inflation



RP to host mining meet in October

Legacy rural banks hit BSP moves

SBMA to invest ₱160M in WiMax security network

Transco concessionaire seeks funding from IFC

Housing . . .

From page B1

The All-new Honda Jazz: '07-'08 Japan Car of the Year



FPHC to trim debt by $100M

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lazaro

LOPEZ INVESTMENT FIRM First Philippine Holdings Corp. will reduce its debt by $100 million in the next two years with the help of proceeds from the sale of its stake in Manila North Tollways Corp. (MNTC), the operator of the North Luzon Expressway.

FPHC president Elpidio Ibañez said the company expects to secure the P6.2 billion proceeds from the sale in 90 days.

FPHC with its parent company Benpres Holdings Corporation (Benpres), both controlled by the Lopez family, sold their combined controlling stake in the tollroad business for P12.2 billion to Metro Pacific Investments Corp. of telecom magnate Manuel V. Pangilinan.

MPIC is the local flagship firm of Hong Kong-based conglomerate First Pacific Co. Ltd., which has interests in the real estate and utility sectors.

The interests of First Holdings and Benpres were held by First Philippine Infrastructure Inc. (FPII).

FPII, formerly City Resources Corp., is a publicly traded company and was 51-percent and 49-percent owned by First Holdings and Benpres, respectively.

FPII, in turn, owns 100 percent of First Philippine Infrastructure Development Corporation (FPIDC).

FPIDC owns 67.1 percent of Manila North Tollways Corp. (MNTC), the concession holder that undertook the construction of the NLEx, and 46 percent of Tollways Management Corp. (TMC), which operates and maintains NLEx.

Aside from reducing debt, Ibañez said the company might use a portion of the proceeds to fund investments of its joint venture through First Philec Electric Corp. with SunPower Manufacturing Ltd.

The venture operates a wafer-slicing plant at the First Philippine Industrial Park in Batangas that services the growing solar energy industry.

First Philec is the holding company of the manufacturing businesses of First Holdings, while SPML is a subsidiary of solar technology provider SunPower Corporation (SunPower) of the United States.

The Batangas plant is the first large-scale silicon wafer slicing facility in the Philippines and is envisioned to have 100 multiwire saws producing 240 million wafers annually. It is to support approximately 720 megawatts of solar energy.

Philippine Stock Exchange

Maybank

Currencies

PDIC gets ₱3-B BSP loan to pay Bicol bank depositors

Agency cites growing list of shuttered small banks

By Doris C. Dumlao

The Metro Manila advantage

No Free Lunch

Cielito F. Habito



Other advantages

Disadvantages

Congress warned ...









A slim camera with a lot to offer

Close to perfection



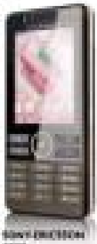


New Kia Corporate Headquarters and Design Center in the U.S.

Kia reaffirms its commitment to American customers



Stylized yet fuss-free



SONY ERICSSON G900

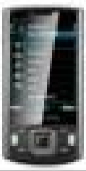


From Konka, a landline and mobile phone in one



THE NEW Konka phones have full open-line capabilities.

Samsung unveils ultimate mobile entertainer



BUSINESS

BSP readies new forex liberalization measures

Reforms focused on foreign currency deposit units

By Doris C. Dumlao

DESPITE THE PESO DEPRECIATION against the dollar, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas will continue implementing foreign exchange liberalization measures.

Its latest foreign exchange liberalization plan focuses on easing certain restrictions on foreign currency deposit units, import payments and capital transactions.

In a proposal being circulated in the banking industry for feedback, the central bank listed six new major policy reforms intended to "further improve the functioning of the foreign exchange market and support an expanding economy with global linkages."

The plans also called for the reduction and simplification of documentation requirements and reporting procedures "to further facilitate the purchase of foreign exchange from the banking system and help reduce the cost of doing business."

The proposed reforms sought to relax the rules governing thrift banks' FCDUs, eliminate the registration requirement for guarantees issued by local and foreign banks and allow banks to sell foreign exchange without prior central bank approval for advance payment of imports with value not exceeding $25,000.

FCDU is a unit of a local bank or a local branch of a foreign bank authorized by the BSP to engage in foreign exchange denominated transactions.

The BSP started implementing foreign exchange policy reforms when the peso was steadily appreciating against the dollar. The move was aimed at boosting demand for dollars and tempering the peso's rally which was hurting exporters and households supported by overseas Filipino remittances.

Although the peso has been slipping against the dollar, the BSP remained committed to pursue its liberalization thrust as it sought to "improve the efficiency of the foreign exchange market."

Another reform sought will make it easier for importers to extend the maturity of import payments, under "documents against acceptance" and "open account" arrangements, up to 360 days from the date of bill without prior BSP approval and regardless of frequency.

These two arrangements are among the methods by which import transactions are settled. Under "documents against acceptance," an exporter may decide to release shipping documents to a buyer on acceptance of the exporter's drafts while the importer is under an obligation to pay at a future date. This method benefits both since the importer is able to receive the goods before payment and the exporter has an assurance that payment will be made at a specified future date.

Under an "open account" arrangement, the importer can make payments at a specific date in the future without issuing any negotiable instrument. The buyer uses this method when there are many suppliers of the product.

Proposed cut in perks to benefit education, infra

By Michelle V. Remo

THE RATIONALIZATION OF THE granting of fiscal incentives, if approved by Congress, is expected to benefit the education sector and boost infrastructure development in the country, according to the Department of Finance.

The fiscal incentives rationalization bill is seen to generate P30 billion in tax revenue and the DOF has proposed that the amount be divided between infrastructure development and public education enhancement programs.

Improving infrastructure and human resource capability is deemed a more permanent way to enhance the country's competitiveness, the DOF said in a discussion paper on the said measure.

The bill, which the DOF hopes to be enacted into law soon, will cleanse redundant tax and duty-free privileges enjoyed by some businesses. Incentives are considered redundant if the recipients would have invested in the same businesses even without the perks.

DOF estimates showed that the government had been losing more than P200 billion in potential tax collection yearly due to the fiscal incentives granted to preferred projects.

A DOF-commissioned study by economist Renato Reside showed that more than 50 percent of the incentives granted yearly by the Board of Investments were redundant. This is equivalent to nearly P50 billion in foregone revenue per year.



Business Monday
Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Espino



Offshore investments getting hotter for Pinoys



By Ma. Salve Duplito
INQUIRER.net

AT 25 YEARS OF AGE, marketing management graduate Kendrick Chua has already invested—and lost money—in offshore instruments particularly in China, real estate investment trusts and a Euro-denominated fund. To say that his $10,000 joint investment with his mom in a private bank is "not doing so well" is an understatement, but the young investor is not fazed.

PERSONAL FINANCE

"I am investing for the long-term and I know that you cannot learn without making mistakes. Sure, I lost money, but I'm learning too and I really like investing," Kendrick says.

Kendrick hopes to have more access to options offshore to stabilize his portfolio, chunks of which are also invested in the local stock market and local mutual funds. Experts say this is the whole point of real diversification—investment language for putting your eggs in different baskets so that if some of the baskets don't do too well, you can save the eggs in the other baskets.

The rising demand for offshore investment options may have something to do with the fact that the local market's pulse lately has been as boring as that of someone in a coma, but experts say that in good times and bad, local investors can benefit from a self-diversified portfolio. That means not just dividing your investment money in different kinds of instruments, but also in different country baskets.

OFFSHORE/B2-3







Let the dog wag its tail

MAPping the Future
Vicente T. Villegas

'Must give back'

Poverty fight

Business' duty

Mabuhay Miles' new features

Cosmetics firm taps talents via student competition

By Riza T. Olchondra



Offshore investments getting hotter for Pinoys

Firm offers insurance plus 'safe' investment

By Doris C. Dumlao

VARIABLE UNIT-LINKED (VUL) insurance, which combines life insurance policy with mutual fund-like investment, has gained acceptance from the Filipino market over the last six years. With the lingering global financial turbulence triggered by the US credit crunch, however, most underlying instruments in managed funds—whether equities or bonds—have seen the kind of volatility that make investors jittery.

But what if the investor can have a type of product that combines life insurance with a guaranteed investment instrument almost at par with the deposits offered by banks?

Such "structured" products which allow investors to profit from the upside in financial markets while capping downside risks have become popular across Asia in recent years, especially at the height of the US-spawned global financial turbulence when everyone is looking for a "safe" haven for their hard-earned money. Pru Life UK, the Philippine subsidiary of British life insurance giant Prudential Plc which pioneered VUL insurance in this market—has rolled out the country's first peso-denominated life insurance product with a guaranteed investment return of 21 percent over a fixed period of four-and-a-half years.

For a minimum investment of P120,000, ProLink Capital Secured Plus allows the investor to gain from underlying Philippine global bonds or ROPs while avoiding downside risks from a continuing global market volatility, top company officials say.

Mohit Majumdar, Pru Life UK president, says the guaranteed product would "address the increasing demand of investors for an option that will provide them a means to park their money and can secure returns in addition to some insurance protection."

The guaranteed minimum return of 21 percent over a four-and-a-half years implies an annual return of about 4.7 percent, better than the average yield on most bank deposits. And it gives life insurance protection, too. Pru Life thinks that the return can hit as much as 23-24 percent at the end of four-and-a-half years, but because it also incurs some cost on selling this product, it guarantees only at least 21 percent at the end of the investment period, Majumdar says.

With this offering, Pru Life assumes that the value of ROPs will henceforth increase on the back of the country's improved macroeconomic fundamentals over its investment horizon. For instance, the country's inflation rate may have peaked, thereby lowering risk premium on ROPs over the long term.

Majumdar says it's thus now a good time to invest in managed funds, to benefit from rebound in underlying instruments. "Managed funds offer great value, but if they're not comfortable with that, this is an alternative," he says. He notes that this product is for people who want to diversify or are looking for safe investments aside from bank deposits.

"We're in for exciting times and what's pleasing for me is that the Filipino customer has more choice," he adds.

There are similar products offered in the local market by other insurance giants, Majumdar says, but these are denominated in foreign currency, have a higher minimum requirement (usually $5,000) and are thus geared more toward the upscale investor market.

"We think there are many customers we can serve with peso products," Majumdar says.

Since the investments are in pesos but are invested in offshore Philippine government bonds or ROPs, the foreign exchange risk is hedged using forward foreign exchange contracts, Pru Life UK senior vice president and chief finance officer Manuel de Rosas says.

De Rosas adds that this product would be an attractive option for any investor, especially at a time clouded by recession and other global uncertainties.

"The credit crisis in the US, the surge in oil prices in the world market and the spike in supply side inflation, both here and abroad, have caused uncertainty and volatility in the local bond and equities markets," De Rosas says. He notes that this product is designed for the customer without appetite for market fluctuations because the return on investment was assured if the investor holds the instruments until maturity (Feb. 15, 2013).

A life insurance product becomes "variable" when the policy value at any time varies according to the value of the underlying investment funds at that time. This means that the policy value is "linked" to the investment funds, so that the fund's investment performance is directly reflected in the policy value. But unlike regular VUL products, this new product offered by Pru Life guarantees a minimum yield.

"This product is the first of its kind, offering capital protection, assured competitive returns and shorter holding period and is denominated in pesos. Other companies currently offer only capital protection, a much longer holding period and products denominated in US dollars," De Rosas adds.

If something happens to the investor while the investment contract is still enforced, his beneficiaries will get the insurance coverage plus the investment yield.



MOHIT Majumdar

Features in Brief

Sun introduces next gen broadband

FIVE YEARS SINCE BREAKING INTO THE PHILIPPINE TELECOMMUNICATIONS scene, Sun Cellular continues its aggressive run with the recent introduction of its next generation broadband service—Sun Broadband Wireless.

Powered by Sun's latest generation High-Speed Packet Access (HSPA or simply 3.5G) and all-IP network, Sun Broadband Wireless brings the latest mobile broadband technology at the same super value that Sun is best known for.

Imagine the flexibility of taking your broadband service with you 24/7, thereby creating a new level of personal high-speed internet experience at very affordable rates.

With Sun Broadband Wireless, at P999 a month and with no overtime modem charges, one gets a flat-rate broadband service.

With its "plug-and-play" set-up, one needs only the Sun Broadband Wireless SIM card and USB modem.

Sun Broadband Wireless is initially available in Makati, Manila, Mandaluyong, Quezon City, Las Piñas, Muntinlupa, Parañaque, Pasay, Pasig.

IM as Pinoy as texting

THE USE OF IM, or "Instant Messaging," the counterpart of text messaging in the online world is also very popular among Filipinos.

"In Manila alone, 50 percent of people online are using some kind of an instant messenger—higher than many of their counterparts in other Asian capitals," according to Chikka chairman, chief executive officer of Chikka.com quoting a recent survey by Synovate PAB.

"While greater access to the Internet also means greater access to Instant Messaging, we believe that the popularity of IM is natural, for the same reasons that we embraced text messaging," added Baduria.

An instant messenger allows online users to chat in real time with other users, normally friends whom they have accepted and saved in a contact or buddy list. Like text messaging, IM chat has the apparent benefits of being a more tactful and less obtrusive medium when compared to other modes of communication; only this many of the other popular services on the Internet, it is free.

Instant messaging applications are provided by companies like Yahoo!, AOL and MSN and have been popular since the late 1990s in many parts of the world where Internet access was ever then already very common.

Around the same time in the Philippines, Chikka.com launched its own version of an Instant Messenger that integrated free text messaging capabilities and easy mobile replies.

It also allowed mobile users to log on to the IM using their phone numbers.

Internet penetration in the Philippines has increased from a measly 2 percent in 2001 to over 20 percent by some estimates today, or over 20 million Filipinos who have online access.

This continues to grow with cheaper more accessible broadband and wireless broadband.

Following the money around the world

Financial news getting more than its fair share of viewers



JEREMY Fish

Change in viewing habits helps explain why some TV networks have turned their programs to concentrate on news that affect investments and money trends

Developer launches 'casatels' in Batangas





Wall Street Journal debuts lifestyle mag to draw luxury ads

Nestlé Philippines destroys counterfeiting equipment



PLDT, NCCC MALL SEALS PARTNERSHIP DEAL



"COKE IS IT!"–CINDY'S BAKERY



PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND

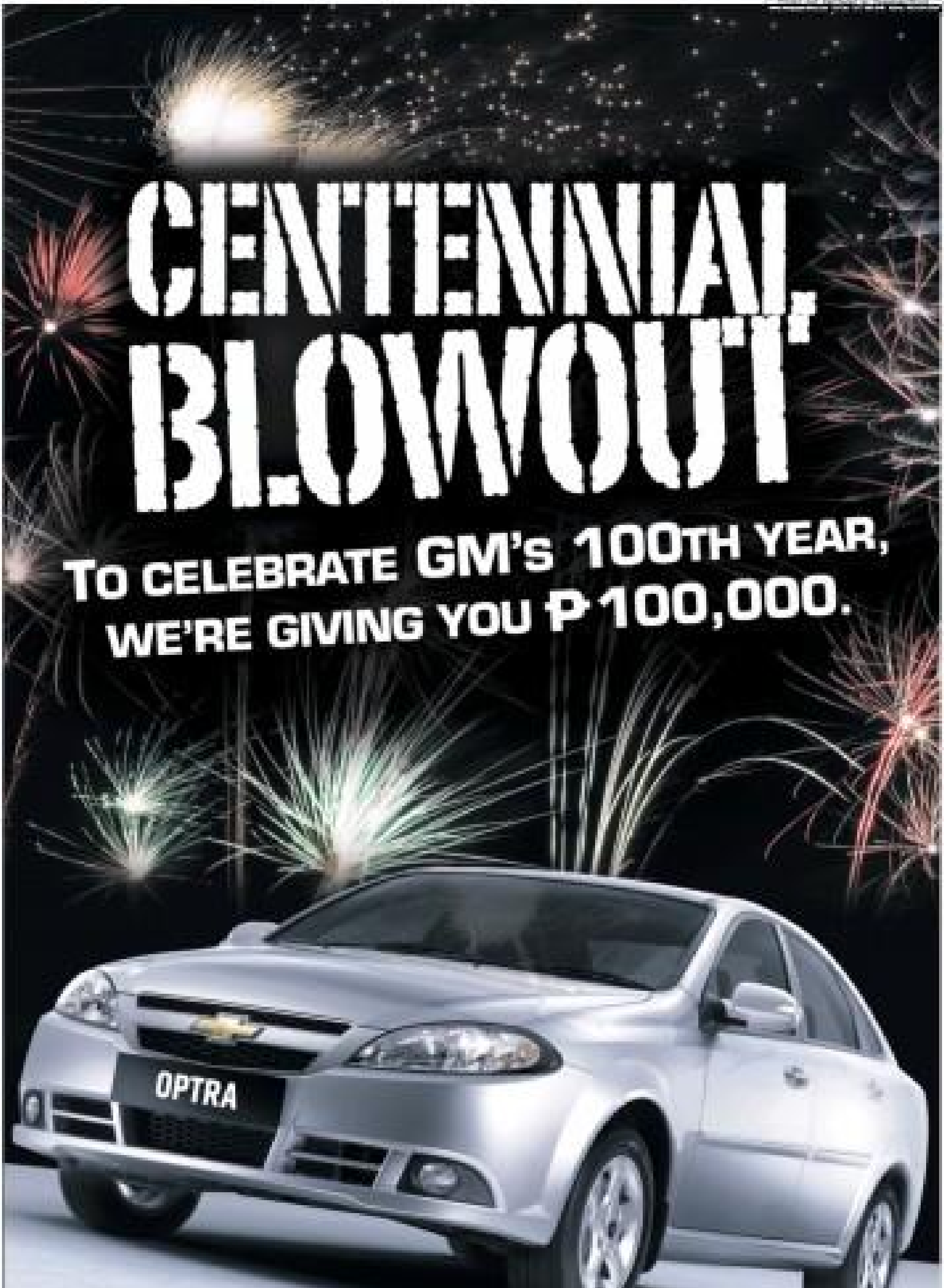
Looking for funding opportunities for your projects?

The new look of Victoria

Manila International Book Fair goes to SMX

Yao Ming Reebok in RP





Buy a Chevrolet Optra Sedan or Wagon and get ₱100,000 worth of Chevrolet gift certificates. Enjoy this blowout until September 30, 2008.

Get gift certificates on selected Captiva models too: Gas 2WD and 4WD - ₱90,000; Diesel 4WD - ₱70,000; Diesel 2WD - ₱60,000; Diesel 2WD Motorshow Ed. - ₱50,000

CHEVROLET

next

BUSINESS Monday

5 habits of highly effective tax collectors

By Margarito B. Teves
Secretary of Finance

I CONSIDER THE Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) as the eldest child of the Department of Finance (DOF) family, that child whose parents put so much of their dreams and aspirations, an extension of one's own goals and to which I also measure my own professional achievements as the head of this very big family.



TEVES

'We should realize that all 'revenuers' have a hand in the schools and health centers that the government builds'

Be proactive

First things first

End in mind

Win/win

Bright future ahead for energy saving lamps



AKARI CEO Christopher Tiu (left) and Jerard Yu, Akari sales manager, show off Akari energy-saving lamps.

Soap making seminar set

PR Congress boasts of top caliber speakers

5 habits of highly effective tax

Synergize

Einstein provides vital clue for inventor

Filipino chemical engineer sees opportunity in fuel crisis



VICTOR Apos installing his zero nitro power injector in Baguio recently.

Like a science teacher

Saving fuel

Increasing mileage

Synthetic fuel

MOVEMENTS

CFA Philippines names new president

Micro entrepreneur ...

BUSINESS Monday



Filipinos edge out rivals in shipbuilding

Local firm makes high- and medium-speed ferries, patrol vessels and specialist work boats



PLASTIC drinking straws are turned into "flowers."

Micro entrepreneur earns daily bread from street artistry





THE CONCERT: "Apo of the Philippines" is on Sept. 20 at the Araneta.

LifeStyle Arts&Books

Editor: Thelma Sioson San Juan Arts and Books Editor: Lito B. Zulueta

APO HIKING SOCIETY

Four decades in the performing arts

'If you stay around long enough, you get hip all over again' –Jim Paredes

By Walter Ang
Contributor

THE APO HIKING SOCIETY, one of the country's leading music icons, will kick off a yearlong celebration marking their 40th year on the music scene with a pre-anniversary concert, "Apo of the Philippines," Sept. 20, 8 p.m., at Araneta Coliseum.

The concert will celebrate 40 years of lasting friendship among Danny Javier, Boboy Garovillo and Jim Paredes, and the music they have shared with Filipinos since the group was formed in college (when they were first known as the Apolinario Mabini Hiking Society).

Paredes is now known more to younger audiences as one of the mentors to a group of singer-hopefuls in the previous season of reality TV show "Pinoy Dream Academy."

Older audiences who grew up with the group, will recall that Apo also hosted several TV shows, including their own noontime Sunday show "Sa Linggo nAPO Sila," which turned into the daily noontime show "'Sang Linggo nAPO Sila."

Musical journey

This upcoming concert is not at all a requiem or a comeback concert. After all, over the years, the Apo Hiking Society has recorded 26 albums and performed in thousands of live concerts in the Philippines and over 50 cities worldwide, including the US, Canada, Singapore, Indonesia, Germany, Switzerland, Italy and Japan.

"We actually do an average of 30 shows every year," says Paredes.

Despite having migrated to Australia a few years ago, he comes home when bookings are lined up.

"Apo of the Philippines" will be a musical journey of the group's unforgettable songs such as "Pumapatak ang Ulan," "Awit ng Barkada,"

PAGE C4



FEU theater group mounts Pinter plays

Four decades . . .

Tribute albums

MusicArtes presents 'Piaf: Love Conquers All'



FRENCH-CANADIAN Naomi Emmerson portrays the legendary Edith Piaf



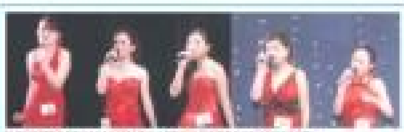
Pinoy singers triumph in Singapore 'Turandot'

By Pablo A. Tariman

Soprano Rachelle Gerodias and tenor Lemuel de la Cruz bring their vocal skills to foreign audiences

Triumphant

Torrescu



WINNERS FROM JOHN ROBERT POWERS SHOWCASES





MIA CABRECO, Joel Torre, Ralph Pena, JM de Guzman

NY-based Ma-Yi Theater launches book of plays

From page C4

the larger framework of Asian-American theater and Filipino diaspora.

"This book invites the reader to study the plays" and the company's participation in the discourse on the 'savage' tropes of dangers and deceit in plays that at initial reading seem to be merely about domestic dramas, the lure of self-reckoning in the marketing of theater productions, and the articulation of nationalist struggles in homelands, even as the production site—New York—necessitates a rethinking of both cosmopolitanism and nationalism," Tiongson-Lebleu says.

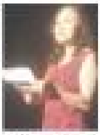
"The act of publishing the plays, therefore, is also a way for the company to re-evaluate not only the work it has done but also its vision of Asian-American theater in the context of contemporary developments in the world."



PHILIPPINE PEN chair Elmer Ordoñez and National Artist for Literature Bienvenido Lumbera



SHAMAN'S Cristeta Buenaventura and Marie Buenaventura



JOJ Barrios Lebleu

Manila

Executive director Jorge Ortoll adds that to be invited back to Manila is to be invited home and that Ma-Yi is looking to exchange collaboration with artists here.

"Collaboration is the name of the game," Ortoll says. "I would like to see Filipino actors and New York actors working together on an original piece ... create the development of the Asian-American playwright, director and actor."

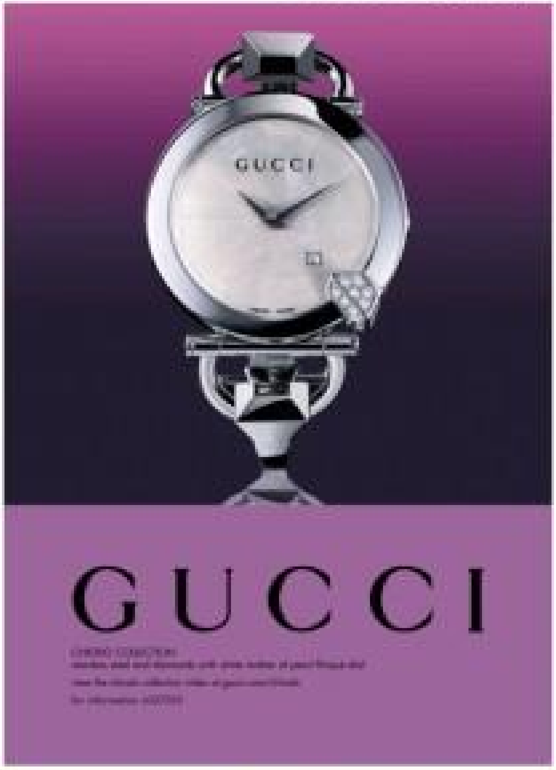
What began as a Filipino-American theater in 1989 has now expanded to being an Asian-American company. Ma-Yi, a name first used by 14th-century Chinese traders in referring to a group of islands now known as the Philippines, is the leading professional producer of Asian-American plays in the United States. It has received 13 Obie Awards (Off-Broadway's highest honor), a Drama Desk nomination for Best Play and several Henry Design awards.

According to the Ma-Yi website, the choice of using the name was to recognize the vibrant culture that existed before the Western colonizers came.

"Savage Stage: Plays by Ma-Yi Theater Company" is available at Solidaridad, Fully Booked, A Different Bookstore, and Powerbooks.

The staged reading, the company's third show in the Philippines, was made possible by the generosity and support of the Asian Cultural Council (Philippines and New York). It was billed as part of the Virgin LabFest 4, a festival of new works by Filipino playwrights organized by the Cultural Center of the Philippines, Tanghalang Pilipino, and Writers' Bloc.

E-mail the author at [illegible]



NY-based Ma-Yi Theater launches book of plays

By Dexter R. Matilla
Contributor

SITTING THROUGH THE staged reading of four plays by Ma-Yi Theater Company at the CCP Little Theater could make even the most decorous feel a bit uneasy.

Filipinos living abroad, at their quirkiest, were being portrayed on stage by some of the country's fine stage actors to the delight and applause of an appreciative crowd composed of students, professors, labor leaders, stage actors, theater buffs, [illegible], foreign guests and local media.

In excerpts from "Project: Balangiga," Filipinos and Americans engage in debate whether the historic Bells of Balangiga, which are in the possession of the United States of America, should be returned to the Philippines.

The quirkiness begins when one Pinoy character introduces himself as being single, then progresses to one Pinoy piano teacher breaking into a song he has written as his contribution to the dialogue.

It continues with "[illegible]" by Chris Millado and "Middle Finger" by Han Ong, family-oriented stories divulging the hardships of Filipino families living abroad in trying to adapt themselves to and blend in with American culture and society.

"Nebraska," a work-in-progress slated for production in New York in 2009, is about a Filipina boarding a train without having purchased a ticket.

> "Savage Stage" collects nine previously produced original plays into a 400-page anthology

Authenticity

Despite these foibles, the fact that Filipinos are clever and persevering should not be overlooked. And this, perhaps, is what the [illegible] are for—the authenticity and innovation that Ma-Yi Theater brings.

Ralph Peña's artistic direction as well as the amazing performances of veterans [illegible], Joel Torre, [illegible], [illegible], along with up-and-coming stage actors [illegible], [illegible] and [illegible] made the one-night-only affair all the more memorable.

This was all part of the launching of the 400-page book "Savage Stage: Plays by Ma-Yi Theater Company," edited and compiled by Palanca-winning poet and playwright [illegible].

"Savage Stage" is a compilation of nine previously produced Ma-Yi original plays as well as essays that locate the texts within

[illegible]



LIFESTYLE Arts&Books



Opera for beginners



BALLET Philippines artistic director Alan Hineline, Sofia Zobel Elizalde, British Ambassador Peter Beckingham, BP artistic director Max Luna III and BP president Ma. so Madrimon

PHOTOS BY ARNOLD ALMACEN



BALLET Philippines dance corps with British Ambassador Beckingham at his Forbes Park residence

New lilt and high enthusiasm at Ballet Philippines



SOFIA Zobel Elizalde



NEW BP artistic director Alan Hineline

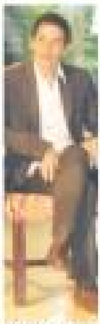
By Tess Reyes Macalinao
Contributor

I THOUGHT THE INEVITABLE QUESTION would never be asked, but it was. "What advice would you give a young dancer who wants to make it?" To which Alan Hineline replied rather dryly, "Train, train, train." It wasn't any different from the answer a young Liza Minelli got when she asked, "How do I get to Broadway?" The answer: "Practice!"

From what I have witnessed in the sweat-and-resin infused rehearsal hall at the basement of the CCP where 22 or so dancers and apprentices of Ballet Philippines go at it day after day, there is no question about wanting to make it. Rather, the question more apt to ask would be: Who are they dancing for?

For a few years now, a handful of patrons have faithfully come season after season, watching the lowers and lows, the ups and downs of this dance company that refuses to make a final curtsy. And with good reason. There is too much talent to be wasted, too much heart and soul expended, passion that cannot be ignored. With each season, hopes run high that perhaps this time, the bottom line figure would match the muscle aches.

The cocktail party launching Ballet Philippines' Season of New Beginnings was graciously hosted by British Ambassador Peter Beckingham and his wife, Jill. The ambassador, who sits on the Ballet Philippines board, has been a supporter of ballet companies in the countries where he has been posted: Australia, Sweden, and his



ARTISTIC director Max Luna III

first love began, when watching the New York City Ballet was a favored pastime.

There was an obvious tingle in the air during the reception; it almost felt like Christmas. You could tell when Maan Hontiveros got on the microphone to introduce the season for the gala date, in her long-running role as president of Ballet Philippines, and when she introduced the company's new artistic directors.

Hineline

Alan Hineline's dance career runs the gamut from dancer to choreographer to trainer.

His dance affiliations include companies that range from the classical with the Eglevsky Ballet, modern with Joyce Trisler Danscompany and even the post modern Louis Falco Dancers and Musicians. His body of work can be seen in the repertories of American Ballet Studio Company, Pennsylvania Ballet, Atlanta Ballet, Kansas City Ballet, among others. They have been performing in prestigious dance competitions, among them the Nagoya International Ballet Festival in Tokyo and the International Ballet Competition in Jackson, Mississippi.

Luna

Max Luna III became a member of Ballet Philippines at the age of 16 after training with Eddie Elejar at the Cultural Center of the Philippines. After leaving Manila, he went on to an international dance career with Ballet Internacional de Caracas, Ballet Hispanico, Joyce Trisler Danscompany, Les Ballets Jazz de Montreal, followed by six brilliant years with the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. His 20-year teaching career and work as a choreographer has taken him all over the world including Teatro Nuovo di Torino, Bournonville International Ballet Seminar in Copenhagen, Bandar Dance Academy in Norway, the Actor's Studio and Peridance in New York, among many more.

High on enthusiasm

Hineline and Luna, now faced with the task of guiding the 38-year-old ballet company as its artistic directors, are feeling high on enthusiasm, matched only with dedication, hard work, foresight and even hindsight, with a season's repertoire that includes new works by both of them and BP resident choreographer, Alden Lugnasin, as well as re-mounting of company classics by choreographers past, as in Agnes Locsin's powerful Centennial masterpiece, "La Revolucion Filipina" as its first offering, and sometime within the season, Alice Reyes' "Amada", based on Nick Joaquin's works, "Bolero" and "Summer Solstice".

Outreach

Luna expounds that his and Hineline's vision is to see Ballet Philippines as a mothership for satellite schools to be founded all over the nation.

Already, a nationwide tour is in the making, with the intention of exposing young would-be dancers all over the Philippines to the possibility of a serious dance career.

Hineline is strong on the opposite element of an outreach program, himself having come from a small town in America. It was inspiring for him, he says, when he watched a ballet as a young boy. And thus he knows what he speaks of when he rallies his point of bringing ballet performances out of the theater and into the provinces.

Although this is not a new notion to the ballet company, recent years have deprived the company that pleasure of extending the art to far-flung places. The reasons have sadly been economic.

Sofia Elizalde

Dovetailing the artistic team was yet the presence of a third party in the person of Sofia Zobel Elizalde, newly elected member of the board, heading the Resource Committee.

Being who she is cannot be ignored, but perhaps more than being the namesake of great malls and a main investor, is the fact that Sofia's ballet pedigree is impeccably hand-in-pointe Ballet Philippines, dyed-in-the-wool so to speak.

Having literally grown up in the dance company's ballet studios, she worked her way up from student to apprentice, then finally principal dancer. In the years following her retirement as a dancer, she nurtured the dream that one day we would "see a company that thrives in the Philippines."

Her drive is contagious, becoming as she has been touted, a "professional fundraiser for dance". She gamely laughs this off, single-mindedly carrying on to bring this dream to fruition. Her desire to "bring back the glamour and glitz" of going to the ballet will be realized by a black tie fund raising ball, the New Beginnings Gala in October, co-hosted by transcendent gala chairperson, Elizabeth Yorro, former dancer of Ballet Philippines and Bistro Kitty in New York.

The "dress up" part is not to be mistaken for an elitist snob, but really to give the fund raising event an air of importance and respect for a worthy cause.

Sofia is known as the ballet company's new tagline, "Your soul in motion," which connotes an affectionate passionate support and oneness with the dance.

Already, there has been a show of support for Filipino artistry and the ballet company from the Philippine Tatler, Sofitel Philippine Plaza, Shell, Globe, Cathay Pacific, Ayala Land Premier, Farm Al M and hopefully many more to come. "Monetizing" John Silva, Ballet Philippines board treasurer is optimistic that the ball has started rolling.

Preview

As a preview to the season's programme, three pairs of dancers all in black, slinked their way amidst the cocktail crowd with excerpts from Max Luna's "American Rhapsody", a fresh collage of American standards renditions, but not at all like Twyla Tharp's Sinatra Suite. "How Long has This been Going On" was danced by Candice Adea and Biag Gaongen, "I Love You Porgy" by Georgette Sanchez and SHAIDI MORbeneden Bailan, and "Embraceable You" by the sultry Carissa Adea and newly-anointed company member, Barefoot boys Lucky Nimenblan.

All six danced confidently barefooted even on the marble floor. The well-applauded number hushed the audience at the start. Whether or not it was because of the familiarity of the music, it didn't matter, because the dancers danced and the audience watched, and that hopefully was a good omen for a season of new beginnings.

For season subscription inquiries, call 26-523-3311(223), 551-1003. For tickets and information of the New Beginnings Gala, call Sago Rome Studio 10-321 737-2083 or 843-9572.



BALLET Philippines dancers preview Max Luna's "American Rhapsody"

100 Kwentong Peyups

A Collage of U.P. Memories





The painter is also a singer

Artist Jack Salud plays Tamino in 'Magic Flute'



Opera for beginners

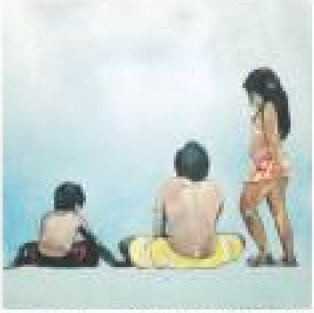
Eclectic

Proven

The Philippine Opera Company brings back Mozart's "The Magic Flute," recast for a kiddie audience







Mom's the artist

Nikki Luna's art makes biting statements about women in the home

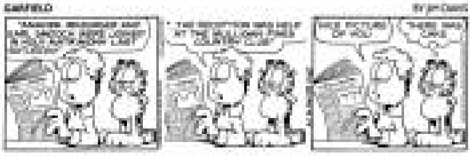
The painter is also...

FROM BOOK TO FILM

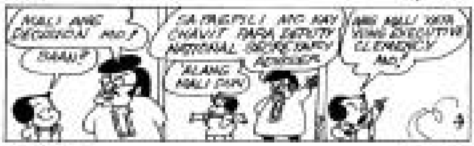
Babylonian babble



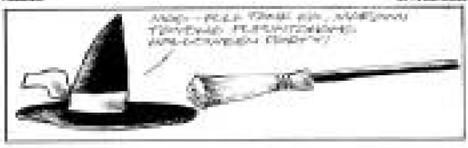
GARFIELD — By Jim Davis



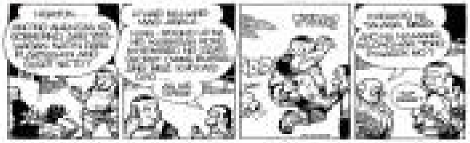
A. LIPIN — By Jess Abrera



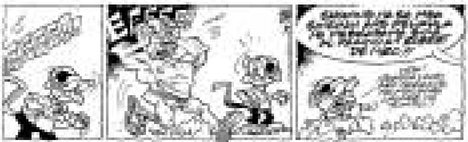
TULDOK



PUGAD BABOY — By Pol Medina Jr.



DIVINE COMEDY



JAMES BOND



DICK TRACY

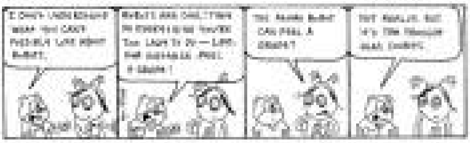


BABY BLUES — By Jerry Scott

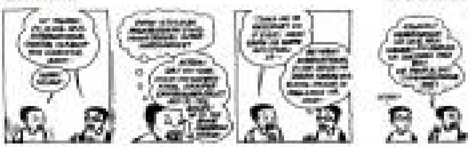


LOVEKNOTS — By Elizabeth Chionglo

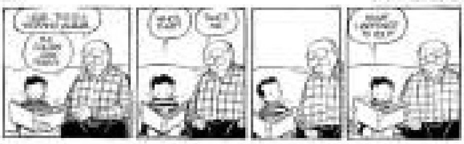




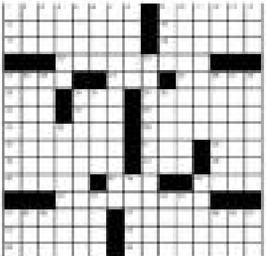
KIKO MACHINE — By Manix Abrera



BEN — By Daniel Shelton



DAILY CROSSWORD



HOROSCOPE

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku — By Dave Green

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5			1				2	9
		6			7			
2		9	3		6	8		7

Difficulty Level ●

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Answer to previous puzzle

Babylonian babble

From page E1



Vin Diesel plays a futuristic mercenary.

[illegible]

Simplified ruthlessly

[illegible]

Clamor for order

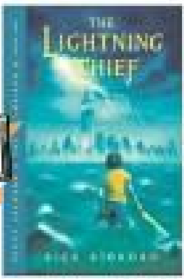
[illegible]

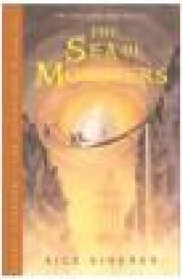


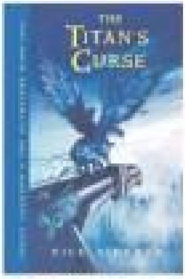
Freaks and Greeks

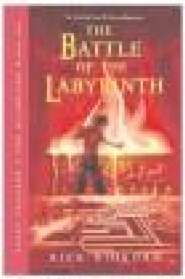
Forget everything else. Percy Jackson and the Olympians are the closest thing to Harry Potter on the bookshelf











[illegible]

Accessible narrative

[illegible]

Available from National Book Store.



'Endo,' 'Kubrador', 'Tribu', 'Jay' in Dumaguete

[illegible]

29th Manila International Book Fair

[illegible]

LIFESTYLE Arts&Books

Sculptures that wink at you

Pete Jimenez's scrap metal sculptures are shot through with energy and wit—maybe because he has such a great time making them



"TWISTER"

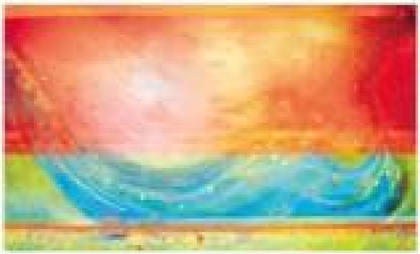
New day for Philippine art

Manila galleries band together under Bago

By Dexter R. Matilla



"WAVE of Passion," by Gabriel Lorenzo



"FLOWER Vendors," by Jonas Roces

IN A TIME WHEN THE DEMAND FOR Asian art has significantly increased, 22 distinguished art galleries have come together and create what should be the newest movement to push Philippine art right to the forefront.

Bago, or Bonafide Art Galleries Organization, is composed of [illegible]

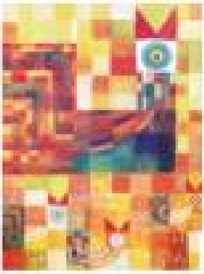


"AFTERNOON Tea Time," by Anthony Palo





"LIVING on a Prayer," by Jaime Gubatan; (left) "The Subject," by Alexander Tan



"TULAD ni Itay," by Jose Miguel Tejido

[illegible]

E-mail the author at dxmatilla@yahoo.com

VISUAL ARTS



BY LOFRANCO

Lofranco at West

[illegible]

Sanchez at West

[illegible]

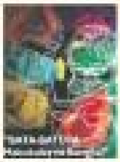
Arcos at Crucible

[illegible]

Calleja at Big & Small Art Co.

[illegible]

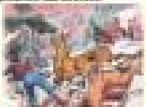




Mangilinbang and Inso at Art Asia

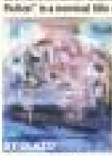
[illegible]

De Leon, Olazo at Duemila

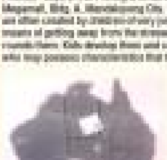


BY DE Leon

[illegible]



BY OLAZO



"AS IS, Where Is"

Salvador at Magnet

[illegible]

Tribute to Zepeda



[illegible]



ARTISTS who have contributed their designs to Hallmark for L.I.F.e. [illegible]

Aguilar Alcuaz's 'The Barcelona Years'

TWENTY-THREE WORKS FROM FEDERICO Aguilar Alcuaz will be featured in a special show [illegible]



"BREAD, Basket, Still Life and Landscape"

[illegible]



"AN AFTERNOON in the Artist's Studio"



"LANDSCAPE, Wicker Chair and Two Apples"

The extra dimension of reality in art

By Constantino C. Tejero

SOME PAINTERS BASE THEIR ART on photographs with such fidelity, recording every shift in light and shade and reproducing every fleck of dust and pore of skin, so that the resultant pieces look like photocopies.

[illegible]



[illegible]



[illegible]

Reconstructing the life

[illegible]

Defamiliarizing the self

[illegible]

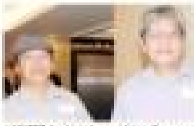






BPI launches art-history book 'Herencia'













More World Heritage churches

PRIDE OF PLACE



Augusto F. Villalon



SAN AGUSTIN Church, Intramuros, Manila

Extraordinary structure

Global significance

Sculptures that wink at you





"SOLDIERS" and, below, "Mango Shake"



More discriminating

ENTERTAINMENT



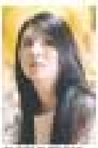


CAN'T BLAME A GUY FOR TRYING

The Talented Ms Yeung

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

HONG KONG SINGER-ACTRESS CHARLIE Yeung has arrived on Hollywood's doorstep via the latest Nicolas Cage action flick, "Bangkok Dangerous," directed by the acclaimed Pang Brothers.



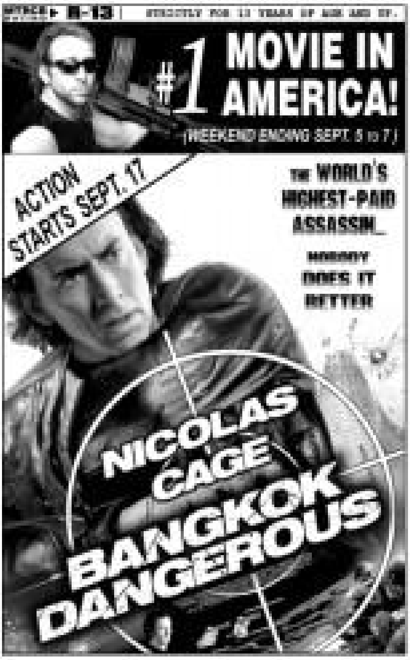
CHARLIE YEUNG

"Bangkok Dangerous" was no. 1 at the US box office last weekend, but Yeung is the first to downplay her impending global stardom. She told Inquirer Entertainment in an exclusive phone interview that working with Cage and the Pang Brothers was more significant than fame.

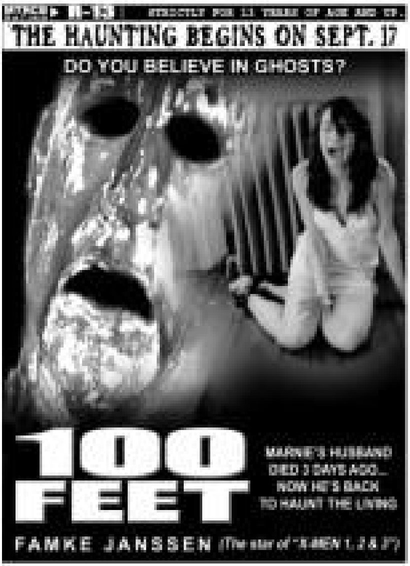
In a way, Yeung is following in the footsteps of her former leading men, Andy Lau and [illegible].

The multi-talented Yeung, who has starred in both art house and commercial flicks, [illegible]

THE TALENTED/ [illegible]









A screaming match and the real rumble

Did You Know...

Dance tilt winners



"BASKETBALL Miss"

Dream team

Kimmel's guests

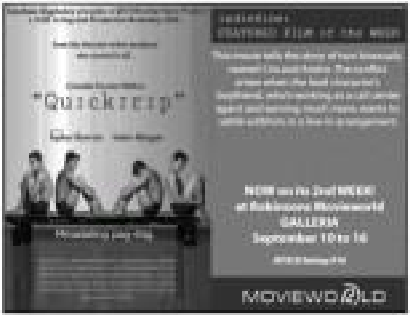
Click!



The talented Ms Yeung

MMTA MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING



Jordin defends Jonases' vow of purity



BRITNEY Spears: "Wow, I was not expecting this."

OVERHEARD



JORDIN Sparks: "Not every guy and girl wants to be a slut, okay?"

What price $200,000?

VIEWFINDER



Nestor U. Torre

For honesty's sake

'Step Brothers'

'Nitoout'



By Bayani San Diego Jr.

Ecstatic

Non-issue

Next stop

Acting breaks



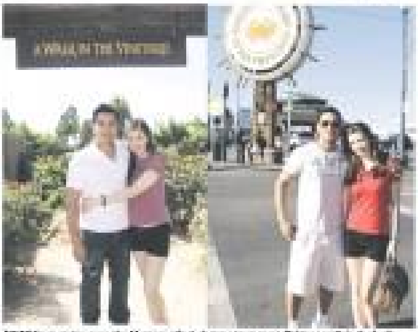
'Step Brothers' lovingly lowbrow

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit

REVIEW

Common enemy

Yes, stupid



AWAY from prying eyes, the Montanos (Bestselvs) business trips. Taking a walk in the Lodi (Zinfandel vineyard, left, and cooling their tools at Fisherman's Wharf in San Francisco.

Sunshine and Cesar kiss and make up

DOLLY WOOD



Dolly Anne Carvajal

What has she realized after the breakup?

No comment

Guess list

Ultimate 'love trip'

Keeping in touch

Acoustic series





ENTERTAINMENT

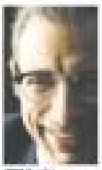


Just back from Devil's Island

[illegible]

Tribute to Rosa Rosal

[illegible]



JEFF Goldblum

Did You Know...

[illegible]

CINEMA ACCESS: 635-5555

MOVIEWORLD

ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD CINEMA MOVIE GUIDE

www.robinsonsmovieworld.com

GALLERIA

1 RIGHTEOUS KILL
2 BABYLON A.D.
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED
5 IMAGINE ME and YOU
6 FOR THE FIRST TIME
7 BIG STAN
8 indieSine: QUICKTRIP
9 WALL · E
10 DEATH RACE

ERMITA

1 WALL · E
2 GRAVEDANCERS
3 FOR THE FIRST TIME
4 BABYLON A.D.
5 RIGHTEOUS KILL
6 RESERVED
7 RESERVED
8 DEATH RACE
9 BIG STAN

METRO EAST

1 RESERVED
2 RIGHTEOUS KILL
3 BABYLON A.D.
4 GRAVEDANCERS
5 DEATH RACE
6 FOR THE FIRST TIME
7 WALL · E
8 RESERVED

NOVALICHES

1 RESERVED
2 RIGHTEOUS KILL
3 BOY CULTURE
4 WALL · E

PIONEER

1 BABYLON A.D.
2 YOU DON'T MESS with the ZOHAN
3 WALL · E
4 RIGHTEOUS KILL



STA. ROSA

1 CONGKAK
2 FOR THE FIRST TIME
3 THE FLOOD
4 BABYLON A.D.

LIPA

1 FOR THE FIRST TIME
2 PERFECT CREATURE
3 CONGKAK
4 THE FLOOD

DASMARIÑAS

1 ALTERED
2 HAROLD and KUMAR
3 JOURNEY to the CENTER of the EARTH
4 FOR THE FIRST TIME

IMUS

1 RESERVED
2 RIGHTEOUS KILL
3 FOR THE FIRST TIME
4 JOURNEY to the CENTER of the EARTH

ANGELES

1 BABYLON A.D.
2 FOR THE FIRST TIME
3 ROGUE
4 CONGKAK

STARMILLS

1 BABYLON A.D.
2 FOR THE FIRST TIME
3 DOBOL TROBOL
4 ROGUE
5 CONGKAK
6 ADAM and STEVE

BACOLOD

1 FOR THE FIRST TIME
2 DEATH RACE
3 PERFECT CREATURE
4 CONGKAK
5 ADAM and STEVE
6 SERBIS

ILOILO

1 FOR THE FIRST TIME
2 DEATH RACE
3 BIG STAN
4 CONGKAK
5 BOY CULTURE
6 MOONRISE FILM FESTIVAL

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RESERVED SEATS NOW AVAILABLE

IMAX	THE PODIUM	
THE DARK KNIGHT	RIGHTEOUS KILL	CINEMA 1
THE ALPS	HELLBOY 2: THE GOLDEN ARMY	HELLBOY 2: THE GOLDEN ARMY ₱160
DINOSAURS	LATE SCREENINGS	
SPIDER-MAN		

LUZON

SOON TO OPEN

VISAYAS · MINDANAO

Just back from Devil's Island



Frannie meets Mrs. S, the new teacher / H4

AIM on the basics of making money / H3

LEARNING

Editor: Chelo Banal-Formoso



YOUNG girls learn to sew by making school uniforms.



JOBS in electricity, machining, welding, plumbing and building construction are among those that are justified.

Schooled to land a job

By Jerry E. Esplanada

FOR DECADES, technical-vocational or tech-voc courses were considered bakya (uncool).



OFFICES and homes require trained people to service personal computers or appliances like the refrigerator and air conditioner.

> High schools should not just prepare students for college but for work as well

Relevant

Dropout rate

Best career option

Club 261





PARTICIPANTS in the three-day workshop try to put into practice lessons learned from a master, National Artist for Visual Arts Benedicto "BenCab" Cabrera.

Bencab at FEU



BENCAB talks on printmaking.

Playgrounds for the MIND

UE joins 30th Inter-Ed counseling fair Sept. 15-16

UST hosts symposium on rule of law

JRU player sets new record with 82 points



CHEd gives PWU autonomous status

Special privilege card for Angelicum alumni

STI celebrates 25th anniversary

LFU Cavite inducts student council officers





Cayetano at PNU rites

St. Jude conducts course in health care management

Fatima-Antipolo hosts Asean higher education conference

Informatics combines business and information technology

Learning the basics of making money



Generating wealth

New ways

Case method

QC teachers complete training

contest • contest • contest

A watch every week...

Win Oxford dictionaries

EUREKA! Queena N. Lee-Chua



A generation of narcissists

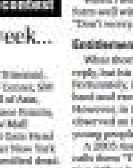
Entitlement Generation

Greatest love of all



Too much self-esteem

Filipina is Campus Teacher of the Year in Texas school



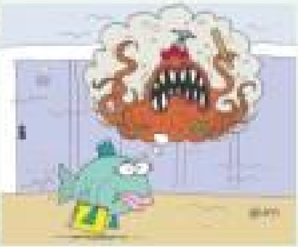
VASQUEZ

Documentary on deaf premieres Sept. 20

INQUIRER IN EDUCATION • bench/ • World Association of Newspapers

FRANNIE LEARNS A LESSON

Chapter 2: My teacher is a sea-monster!



ACTIVITY GUIDE

Using the newspaper

To do and think about...

What will happen next?



Real life & values

Respect for others

WHO	I THINK...	BECAUSE...

Journey to the coral reef



CORALS

A watch every week, dictionaries for the class

Win a Flik Flak